

## Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 LONDON 06247 01 OF 02 220532Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 /079 W  
-----011439 220541Z /11

R 211208Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5369  
INFO AMCONSUL EDINBURGH  
AMCONSUL BELFAST

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 06247

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, PDEV, UK  
SUBJECT: PUBLIC ATTITUDES IN SCOTLAND

SUMMARY: RECENT POLL DATA WHICH APPEARS RELIABLE SUGGESTS THAT THE LABOR PARTY HAS MOVED INTO A SUBSTANTIAL LEAD OVER ITS TWO PRINCIPAL RIVALS IN SCOTLAND; THAT THE CONSERVATIVES HAVE REGAINED THEIR TRADITIONAL SECOND PLACE AFTER RECAPTURING A PORTION OF THE SUPPORT THEY LOST IN THE OCTOBER 1974 ELECTION; AND THAT THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY (SNP) HAS SEEN ITS POSITION ERODE. THESE DATA ALSO INDICATE THAT LABOR ENJOYS A POPULAR ADVANTAGE OVER THE OTHER PARTIES ON MOST OF THE SALIENT ISSUES, AND THAT THE SCOTTISH ELECTORATE, WHICH CONTINUES ITS OVERWHELMING REJECTION OF INDEPENDENCE, WILL VOTE TO APPROVE THE GOVERNMENT'S DEVOLUTION PROPOSALS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED A COPY OF AN APRIL 5 MARKET AND OPINION RESEARCH INTERNATIONAL (MORI) POLL ON POLITICAL ATTITUDES IN SCOTLAND WHICH WAS COMMISSIONED BY ITV. THIS POLL IS OF PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE BECAUSE  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LONDON 06247 01 OF 02 220532Z

IT IS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF SCOTTISH ATTITUDES BY A MAJOR POLLING ORGANIZATION IN MORE THAN A YEAR. THE POLL WAS A QUOTA SAMPLE OF 1002 VOTERS FROM 40 SAMPLING POINTS. ITS STATISTICAL ERROR MARGIN IS 3 PERCENT.

2. THE VOTER PREFERENCE DATA (EXCLUDING "DON'T KNOWS")

INDICATES THE LABOR PARTY ENJOYS A SUBSTANTIAL LEAD OVER ITS TWO MAJOR RIVALS, THE CONSERVATIVES AND THE SNP. THE RESULTS WERE: LABOR, 41 PERCENT; CONSERVATIVE, 30

RESPONDENTS FAVORED THE LIBERAL PARTY. EVEN MORE

HERETOFORE UNPUBLISHED MORI VOTER PREFERENCE DATA COLLECTED OVER THE PREVIOUS 17 MONTHS. THESE DATA INDICATE LABOR SURGED FROM THIRD TO FIRST PLACE IN THE JUNE-AUGUST 1977 PERIOD AND THAT ITS LEVEL OF SUPPORT SINCE THAT TIME HAS HELD STEADY AT AROUND 40 PERCENT. THE SNP, WHICH HAD A LEAD UNTIL JUNE 1977, SAW ITS SUPPORT DECLINE SHARPLY FROM ABOUT 38 PERCENT TO A TREND LINE OF ABOUT 27 PERCENT. SUPPORT FOR THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY, WHILE REGISTERING SHARPER MONTH-TO-MONTH CHANGES, HAS BEEN ON A PLATEAU OF ABOUT 30 PERCENT FOR THE ENTIRE 17-MONTH PERIOD.

3. MORI ALSO SOUGHT TO IDENTIFY PATTERNS OF CHANGING PREFERENCE AMONG SCOTTISH VOTERS BY ASKING RESPONDENTS HOW THEY VOTED IN OCTOBER 1974. DATA REVEALED A SIGNIFICANT NET DECLINE IN SNP SUPPORT, AS 23 PERCENT OF FORMER SNP VOTERS RETURNED TO THEIR PARTIES OF EARLIER PREFERENCE: 11 PERCENT EACH RETURNING TO LABOR AND THE TORIES AND 1 PERCENT TO THE LIBERAL PARTY. THE EROSION OF CONSERVATIVE AND LABOR SUPPORT WAS MARKEDLY LESS: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 LONDON 06247 01 OF 02 220532Z

THE TORIES LOST 7 PERCENT TO THE SNP AND 5 PERCENT TO LABOR, BUT REGISTERED A NET GAIN DUE TO THE PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED DEFECTIONS FROM THE SNP AND LABOR (5 PERCENT); LABOR LOSSES TO THE TORIES WERE BALANCED BY CONSERVATIVE DEFECTIONS TO LABOR, WHILE GAINS FROM THE SNP OFFSET LOSSES TO THAT PARTY. IN AGGREGATE TERMS, THE SNP HAS LOST SUPPORT; THE NET CHANGE IN LABOR'S POSITION IS INSIGNIFICANT; AND THE CONSERVATIVES WON BACK SIGNIFICANTLY MORE VOTERS THAN THEY LOST. THE LIBERALS WERE ALSO NET LOSERS. THESE DATA SUGGEST THAT LABOR, IF ELECTIONS WERE HELD NOW, WOULD LOSE FEW IF ANY OF THE SEATS IT WON IN OCTOBER 1974; THAT THE CONSERVATIVES WOULD WIN BACK SEVERAL OF THE SEATS THEY LOST OF THE SNP; AND THAT THE SNP'S WESTMINSTER REPRESENTATION MIGHT BE REDUCED.

4. THE POLL DATA ALSO INDICATED THAT SCOTTISH VOTERS CONSIDERED UNEMPLOYMENT TO BE FAR AND AWAY THE MOST IMPORTANT CURRENT ISSUE -- INDEED, ITS SALIENCY RATING WAS NEARLY TWICE AS HIGH AS THE NEXT MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE, PRICES. VANDALISM, HOUSING AND EDUCATION ROUNDED OUT THE TOP 5 ISSUES AMONG SCOTTISH VOTERS. LABOR

ENJOYED SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER CREDIBILITY THAN EITHER OF

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 LONDON 06247 02 OF 02 220530Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
IO-13 /079 W  
-----011382 220541Z /11

R 211208Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5370  
INFO AMCONSUL EDINBURGH  
AMCONSUL BELFAST

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 06247

THE OTHER TWO PARTIES ON FOUR OF THESE FIVE ISSUES (THE  
TORIES HAD A 3 PERCENT LEAD OVER LABOR ON VANDALISM).  
IT WAS NOT UNTIL THE EIGHTH RANKED ISSUE, DEVOLUTION,  
THAT THE SNP WON A LEAD OVER THE OTHER TWO PARTIES.

5. MORI ALSO SURVEYED ATTITUDES TOWARD SCOTTISH INDE-  
PENDENCE AND THE PROPOSED REFERENDUM ON THE GOVERNMENT'S  
DEVOLUTION BILL. ASKED TO EXPRESS A PREFERENCE AMONG  
INDEPENDENCE, DEVOLUTION OR THE STATUS QUO, 52 PERCENT  
OF RESPONDENTS ENDORSED DEVOLUTION. ONLY 20 PERCENT  
INDICATED A PREFERENCE FOR INDEPENDENCE, A FIGURE THAT  
HAS REMAINED CONSTANT OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS; 25 PER-  
CENT PREFERRED THE STATUS QUO. ASKED HOW THEY EXPECTED  
TO VOTE IN THE REFERENDUM, 63 PERCENT INDICATED THEY  
WOULD SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS, WHILE 27 PER-  
CENT SAID THEY WOULD VOTE AGAINST. THIS SUGGESTS THAT  
THE MINIMUM POLL REQUIREMENT IMPOSED BY ANTI-  
DEVOLUTIONISTS IN COMMONS WOULD PROBABLY NOT AFFECT  
THE RESULT.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LONDON 06247 02 OF 02 220530Z

6. COMMENT: GENERALLY THESE DATA TEND TO CONFIRM THE TRENDS WE AND OTHER OBSERVERS HAVE PERCEIVED AND ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE GLASGOW-GARSCADDEN BY-ELECTION RESULTS (LONDON 5858). THE SALIENCY OF CERTAIN ISSUES -- E.G. VANDALISM AND EDUCATION -- WAS UNEXPECTED AND SEEMS SUI GENERIS TO SCOTLAND. LABOR'S SUBSTANTIAL LEAD ON MOST OF THE SALIENT ISSUES WAS SOMEWHAT GREATER THAN WE MIGHT HAVE GUESSED. BUT MOST SIGNIFICANT FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE FUTURE POLITICAL INTEGRITY OF THE UK WAS THE FACT THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S DEVOLUTION PROPOSALS HAVE THE SUPPORT OF AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF SCOTS.

STREATOR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** LABOR, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, PUBLIC OPINION POLLS, POLITICAL PARTIES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 21 apr 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978LONDON06247  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780172-0242  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** LONDON  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780432/aaaabagm.tel  
**Line Count:** 188  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** d81befa9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 may 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** N/A  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2894174  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PUBLIC ATTITUDES IN SCOTLAND SUMMARY: RECENT POLL DATA WHICH APPEARS RELIABLE SUGGESTS THAT THE LABOR PARTY HAS MOVED INTO A SUB  
**TAGS:** PINT, PDEV, UK  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/d81befa9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014